cause afforestation has become the talk of the day. What is the Minister going to do about it? Why do they insist on afforestation on a perfectly viable crop land? They are insisting on afforestation on their land only to cover their risk and they are taking money from gullible investors.

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI: I don't think there is any concept of giving land to such private companies. What is envisaged is to give free pattas to the weaker sections of society. That is one. Two: Those industrial undertakings which want to plant trees in certain de-graded areas for their own use. . . (*Interruptions*)... they can be given land in those areas...

SHRI VISHVAJIT PRITHVIJIT SINGH: The honourable Minister has not understood my question. I am talking about afforestation Programme. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is getting some instructions. He will make up.

SHRI VEERENDRA VERMA: He needs notice.

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI: As for the company which the honourable Member has referred to. I do not have information about companies which are coming forward for plantation.....

MR. CHAIRMAN: The woods are lovely, dark and deep but I have promises to keep the question moving. Next question now.

Reimbursement of purchase tax to Vanaspati Industries in Gujarat

*303. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the problem of the reimbursement of purchase tax to vanaspati industries of Gujarat has been resolved and if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that to maintain uniformity in cost structure of vanaspati industries, freight, S. T., Octroi, etc., are being reimbursed in line with the recommendation of Parmeshwaram Committee and if so, what is the amount of reimbursement made during last year to various vanaspati units, State-wise;

(c) whether it is also a fact that in lieu of sales tax, purchase tax is collected in Gujarat and when Parmeshwaram Committee made its recommendations, there was no purchase tax and, therefore, purchase tax is not reimbursed although sales tax commissioner of Gujarat has clarified that purchase tax should be treated on a par with S.T.; and

(d) what is the amout due to vanaspati units of Gujarat by way of pending reimbursement of purchase tax?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir. On representations received from the Vanaspati units located in Gujarat for the reimbursement of purchase tax paid by them under the Gujarat Sales Tax Act, the Government have decided to reimburse the purchase tax paid by them.

(b) Yes, Sir. The State Trading Corporation of India is not maintaining the record of reimbursement of road freight, sales tax and octroi duty State-wise. The provisional incidence of total reimbursement upto 31-3-86 on the above heads are as follows:—

Road Freight ..... Rs. 13 crores
Sales Tax ..... Rs. 21 crores
Octroi .....Rs. 2 crores

(c) Yes, Sir. Necessary instructions have now been issued to the State Trading Corporation of India to reimburse purchase tax to Vanaspati Units in Gujarat.

(d) No claims have been received by State Trading Corporation so far.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Sir. I congratulate the Minister for resolving the problem partly. Now, the purchase tax is going to be reimbursed after three or four years' efforts, still the question remains, Sir. And the answer is given that reimbursement of sales tax is being done. Now, in the case of Gujarat, the reimbursement of sales tax is not being done because according to the Parmeshwaram Committee which guides the rules of reimbursement, declaration form for the sales tax should be filed. Here, two questions arise. When imported oil is used for vegetable oil industries in Gujarat for local consumption, purchase tax is levied. But when the finished goods are meant for export and in those goods if the imported oil is used sales tax forms are not to be filed. Sales tax money is to be deposited and receipts are given by the State administration. Now the STC is insisting that they should give declaration form and not only receipts. But the declaration form is not possible because there is no declaration form in Gujarat for the sales tax that is used for outside export industries. In this case, under the technical plea that there is no declaration form being filed by the vanaspati industries when they are exporting their goods, they are withholding sales tax reimbursement. Would the Minister reimburse that part of the sales tax? That is my question.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Sir, there were two procedures involved. If the hon. Member is referring to a procedure adopted period to July 1985, thereafter the procedure has been simplified. Since August, 1985 the procedure is this: The initial collection of sales tax and subsequent reimbursement is avoided by issuing credit note of the amout equal to the sales tax charged in the invoice subject to the party's furnishing required declaration forms. So far as Gujarat is concerned, there were difficulties regarding purchase tax. That purchase tax problem has since been solved by my senior colleague by holding a meeting. Therefore, no points of difficulty after August, 1985 regarding sales tax have been brought to the notice of the Government.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Sir, Bhagatji had also written a letter to me on this point. And now the reply has come on the same line. My main point is not understood by the Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You write to him a letter.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: The point is that he should reply in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If he cannot understand in the House, the best thing is to write to him.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Sir, I am trying to help him because he is going by those guidelines which are very technical. My main point is this that you remove the technicalities because according to the Parmeshwaram Committee report, octroi and sales tax are to be reimbursed on the imported oil that is used for the manufacture of vanaspati. Now, there are two parts in Gujarat. I would request him whether he would consider that whatever is paid in the name of sales tax—now the purchase tax is also considered—whatever sales tax is paid by the vanaspati manufacturers, would he reimburse without going into all the technicalities? This is my question.

SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT: Sir, you were very correct and I shall certainly welcome the hon. Member to discuss this point with us. If there are any procedural difficulties things left out, we will look into them. The hon. Member had raised the original question. It was on his writing to us that we took a decision. We would discuss with him the other questions.